

## Be Careful What You Wish For by GallifreyGod

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** Angst, Established Relationship, F/M, Fluff, Happy Ending

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Eleven (Stranger Things), Florence "Flo" (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Will Byers

**Relationships:** Joyce Byers & Jim "Chief" Hopper, Joyce Byers/Jim "Chief" Hopper

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**Summary:**

"Be careful what you wish for, 'cause you just might get it. and if you get it, then you just might not know what to do with it, 'cause it might just come back on you ten-fold."

To say Joyce Byers had experienced a rough two and a half years was an understatement. Her son had rocked on the edge of a terrifying death twice, she had lost a piece of her heart to Demogorgon-dogs, and her world had utterly flipped upside down (no pun intended). But what Joyce doesn't understand is of all the good that had come from such a terrible situation. Barely seeing it through the positivity through the vines, she never understood quite the depth of how the butterfly effect changed her life... for the better. She was going to find out.

## 1. Be Careful What You Wish For

### Author's Note:

In honor of season 2, Here's some Jopper :)

Joyce's head sat nestled deep into the crook of Jim Hopper's neck. It had been an extremely long day with both Will and El having nightmares through the night; leaving her exhausted in the day from staying up with the two. Work was swamped at Melvald's, and Hopper had a late night down at the office.

"Joyce. What's on your mind." Dammit, he could read her mind! Maybe it was the gulp she had made that was loud enough to be heard through their television, or maybe it was the way she clung to Hop for dear life.

"Just... stuff. Hop, I really don't want to talk about it." Joyce lied. She wanted to talk about it but she was afraid that saying it out loud would only make her day worse.

"C'mon Joycie. I'm all ears." Hopper said as he petted her curly locks down. Joyce snuggled her head deeper into his neck and inhaled his scent of Camels and truck fuel.

"I just.. don't get me wrong, this isn't about El or anything but I can't help but wonder what my life would've been like if none of this happened. I know I say that I wish it *didn't* happen but all I can think about today is what if it really didn't." Joyce testified as Hopper listened silently.

"I know it's difficult Joyce, but it all happens for a reason. I know I'm not good with all that sappy bullshit about letting things just happen but it's true." Hopper said as he tried to comfort her further.

Joyce just didn't seem to be consoled with his furthest efforts of being her boyfriend/Councilor/Stress Ball. He knew days like this were bound to happen. How could it not? Joyce had been through hell and back in a quite literal form. Some days were better than others. Some days like this, Joyce was quiet and contemplative and some days she

was angry and anxious with a violent touch that usually ended in a breakdown. Other days were great, life couldn't be better.

"I know Hop but it all just... changed. Whether it was a year or two, it changed so much that even the idea of none of this happening is so far-fetched." She admitted while she felt Hopper nod in agreement.

"Joyce. It will get better, it has to. It's over now. I know it was 'over' before but the gate is closed, El and Will are safe, *we* are safe, things are just slowly falling back to normal." Hopper replied as he felt Joyce's silent tears start to wet on his neck.

"Normal doesn't exist anymore." Joyce said as she drifted to sleep, snuggled into Hopper's side.

## 2. 'Cause You Might Just Get It

Joyce woke up with the sun beaming through her window. The bed was uncomfortably cold with Hopper missing next to her. She brushed it off as maybe he was called into work early.

Dragging herself out of bed, Joyce lit a cigarette and started breakfast for the kids. Since she seemed to have a decent night sleep, Joyce guessed that the kids slept nightmare free.

"Kids! Breakfast!" She called as two sleepy boys appeared into the kitchen.

"Jonathon, can you take Will with you when you go to Nancy's for dinner?" Joyce asked as she buttoned up her Melvald's shirt.

Jonathon practically choked on his glass of milk. "Nancy? As in Nancy Wheeler? Pfft. The only time I'd ever be lucky enough to have dinner with Nancy is if I was a Make-a-Wish kid." Jonathon said with a laugh.

Joyce eyed her son suspiciously. She could clearly recall that Jonathon had told her yesterday that he was going to the Wheeler's for dinner.

"Where's El?" Joyce asked as she brushed the Nancy topic off. El practically floated into the kitchen on mornings that Joyce made Eggos.

"El? Who's El?" Will asked with his brows furrowed. Joyce tilted her head with confusion. "El, where is she? It's Eggo day, I figured she would be up before the both of you." Joyce answered.

Jonathon stood out of his seat and pressed the back of his hand to Joyce's forehead. "Are you feeling alright, Mom?" He asked.

Joyce batted away her son's hand as she looked back and forth to the both of them. This had to be some kind of practical joke. Maybe Hopper was in on it too?

"I uh... never mind. Probably just half asleep still. I have to get to

work, Can you take Will to school?" Joyce darted out the door before she could even get an answer from her son.

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Joyce held onto a box of donuts as she trotted through the snow. Hopper always loved when she surprised him with a dozen *fresh* donuts. Not the stale crunchy things that Flo brought to the station.

"Morning Flo, Hopper in?" Joyce asked as she rushed past Hopper's secretary.

"You can't go in there. Chief is busy right now Ms. Byers." Flo said as she tried to stop Joyce but she was already halfway into Hopper's office.

"Morning. You ducked out before I could say goodbye." Joyce said as she tried to plant a kiss on her Hopper's cheek. Jim pulled back and stared at her with disbelief.

"Joyce?" He asked with utter surprise. "Joyce what's gotten into you?" Hopper asked as he stared down at the brunette.

"Hopper knock it off. This is a joke right? Jonathon, Will, and now you? Jesus Hop, it's not funny anymore." Joyce said as her heart started to beat faster.

"Joyce, I don't know what you're talking about but you can't just come in here and start kissing me." Hopper said with a surprised laugh.

"For the things we've done in this office of yours, you're surprised i'm kissing you? Jeez Hop, modesty isn't your thing." Joyce said with a choke of laughter.

"Things we've done? Joyce we aren't in 8th grade anymore. I have a job to do here. And for the record, we haven't done *anything* in this office." Hopper said with a confused look.

"Jim knock it off! You know I've been going through a rough time, this isn't the time for jokes." Joyce said as her laugh dropped into a sour face.

"I wasn't aware that Melvald's counted for a *rough time*." Hopper said with a chuckle as he bit into a donut.

Joyce smacked his arm with disbelief on her face. How dare he? "After everything I've been through with Will, that's what you think I'm talking about?" Joyce spat angrily.

"Will? What about him? He's a good kid, I wasn't aware that anything was going on with him." Hopper said as he sat down at his desk and started rifling through paperwork.

"You're kidding me! Well in case you're done with your jokes, El didn't show up for breakfast. I'm worried Hop." Joyce said with concern as she sat down across from him.

"El? Who's that, your boyfriend?" Hopper said with his brows furrowed deeply.

"Alright you, I'll keep playing this game but not for long." Joyce said angrily as she pushed out of the seat and stormed off.

"Weird." Hopper said with a laugh as he bit back into his donut.

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Alright, at least a grave couldn't lie. Joyce knew it had been far too long since she had visited Bob's grave. She felt guilty and plagued by the death of her ex boyfriend, Bob Newby. It was hard to visit a shrine of something she felt was caused by her.

In the last year, Joyce had visited his grave enough to know where it was but this was just... *odd*.

She searched the graveyard up and down and there was no sign of Bob's grave. Was her mind playing tricks on her?

Joyce slouched down in the spot where she had known Bob's grave was. Feeling despaired and confused, she just wanted Hopper. She just wanted to run to him and hug him. He'd call her Joycie in his especially sweet voice only she knew while he would rub her back gently. God, she just wanted Hopper.

Joyce couldn't hold back the tears that threatened her eyes. Obviously this was farther than a sick practical joke to get her going. Something had changed in the course of the last 12 hours and she didn't know what to do. This wasn't what she pictured when she thought of life without the Upside Down.

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Joyce awoke with a gasp as she flung upward out of bed. Trying to catch her breath, she looked around the room. Her heart started to settle as she saw Hopper sound asleep next to her, completely unbothered by her jumping.

She could feel a small smile creeping onto her face as she realized it had only been a dream. A wildly painful and confusing dream.

When she glanced at the slightly open door, she saw her adoptive daughter standing with a bloody nose and a sorrowful face.

"It was just a dream. A dream where none of this happened. Without the Upside down, you and Hopper wouldn't be a couple, I wouldn't be here, Jonathan wouldn't have Nancy. Things wouldn't be different and better, they would be different and worse." Eleven spoke quietly as she watched Joyce develop a small smile.

Quietly creeping out of bed, Joyce knelt down and hugged El, who was gripping her tightly.

"I didn't mean for you to hear that El, I'm sorry." Joyce said as she pushed a curly lock out of the young girl's face. "I should've known that was you. The Eggos should've been a dead give away." Joyce said with a hint of laughter joined by El's own.

"Early birds." Hopper groaned as he rolled over and smiled at his favorite ladies. Maybe life wasn't so bad. The Upside Down had changed beyond so many things but Will was safe, Eleven had a home, and Joyce loved Hopper. Things weren't so bad.

"How about Eggos for breakfast?" Joyce said with a grin as her and El left Hopper to sleep.

Maybe life wasn't too bad.

Fin.